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Astarte" is comparable to a Greek figurine.

Much closer do we get to an artist's personality in his drawings and studies than in his finished compositions. In the latter the artist is hampered by his medium and the spontaneity and freshness of the drawing has of necessity in the painting almost disappeared. Drawings are of the greatest artistic importance because more personal than paintings, and personality counts next to genius. In the whole range of art it would be difficult indeed to find any pictures ex-

celling in charm and graciousness the French pastellists of the eighteenth century—La Tour and the rest, not forgetting the exquisite drawings in colored chalk of Watteau and Boucher. And before their day the great Holbein was executing for our delight the masterly portraits drawn in red chalk which now grace the royal collection at Windsor. A more genial and sympathetic mode of artistic expression than the pastel has never been placed in an artist's hands—and no artist has obtained more engaging results than Whistler.

## MODEL FLATS

BY MARY R. ORMSBEE

**I**F there is any characteristic on which we Americans pride ourselves, it is our independence. We boast that we need copy neither our politics nor our fashions from Europe; we declare, loudly, that we will go our own gait, regardless of what other people may think. And yet, if the truth were told, are we not as bound by our own set of conventions, by the opinions of our friends and neighbors, as the rest of the world? When our neighbors build Mansard roofs, and decorate their lawns with metal deer, is there not apt to be an iron dog by our own gate? And when they affect half-timbers and plaster, do we not begin to look with favor on things Elizabethan?

It is only on remembering this that the reader can realize the courage of the woman of the tenements who banishes from her home plush upholstery, and, battling against the deep-rooted custom of her class, does away with lace curtains and the piano-lamp. The trend towards tenement homes suitably and prettily furnished is one of the most interesting phases of recent development among that much maligned, much vindicated, and frequently investigated element of New York city, the tenement population.

The influences which are bringing

about this new departure are complex. First, the model tenements have drawn to them, along with humbler patrons, cultured people on small incomes, such as social workers, teachers, and literary folk. Besides this natural mingling, in some of the tenements apartments have been furnished especially for groups of working girls, while the settlements, too, have an influence on the taste of their people. Lastly, there is the work of the Association of Practical Housekeeping Centers.

This was started ten years ago with the establishment of the first "model flat" next door to the Nurses' Settlement in Henry Street. The Association now operates four of these centers, and since the success of the first "model flat," other organizations have taken up the idea. Already the Housekeeping Centers Association has graduated about three thousand pupils from its courses. Some of these, it is true, are back-sliders, but the great majority of the young women are still carrying out, to the best of their ability, the principles inculcated at the "flat."

The "model flat" is an effort to show how the best can be made of the tenements as they are. The teacher lives in



MODEL FLAT. HENRY STREET. NEW YORK CITY

the little three or four-room apartment, which is her laboratory, among the women and children she is to instruct, not only in her official capacity, but as friend and neighbor. There are certain standards of hygiene, of sanitation, of economy, which she must demonstrate to her classes, but besides this there is a distinct esthetic ideal. This phase of the work is either ignored or briefly dismissed in any general account of the "model flats," yet it is a very definite part of the aim of the Housekeeping centers.

First and foremost, "the beautiful," as upheld by the teachers, must be essentially practicable. It must add neither to the demands upon the housekeeper, nor to the expense of the home. In all of the four centers the same principles are followed in furnishing. Walls are painted in suitable, pleasing tones; then these can be kept clean and yet be of soothing or cheering tint. There are no

carpets, but the floors are stained to harmonize with the wall-colorings. This is demanded on the grounds of economy, health and taste. All upholstered furniture is banished for the same reasons, and replaced by plain deal chairs, tables, desk and so on, properly stained.

There shall be no curtains or hangings that cannot be put into the tub and scrubbed. This dismisses the time-honored Nottingham lace draperies, and substitutes in their place sash-curtains of Swiss or similar material, in the living room. Very likely there is a bed in the sitting-room, for space is limited, and families are large, in the tenements. In this case, the bed is of white enamel, and there is a denim screen, in tone with the coloring of the room, concealing the wash-stand. A few books on the center-table and a few good pictures on the wall complete the living room. "Good pictures" may sound unattainable for families that can afford only such cramped

quarters, but "penny-prints" of famous masterpieces, either framed plainly or done "passe-partout" are well within the reach of all those above the starvation level.

The same principle of simple furnishing, in one suitable color, everything to be scrubbed with soap and hot water, is carried out in the kitchen and bedroom, and the planning which lightens the housekeeping, also saves these rooms from looking tawdry and cluttered.

If there is a fourth small room, it is dedicated to the children and provided with an enamelled iron bed and trundle-bed for the littlest ones. In one of the "model flats" groups were cut from a strip of Mother-Goose wall-paper, to serve as pictures for the children's room. These were pasted on the wall and treated with a coat of shellac, so that they could be washed whenever the walls of the room were. This decoration delighted the people in the neighborhood.

Each one of the flats is different from all of the others, but they are all furnished on the same allowance, one hundred dollars. This includes everything down to sheets, towels, and kitchen spoons. In doing this, the instructors find their hardest problem is not to secure all the necessary articles for that sum, but to find things that are really suitable. The esthetic delight has certainly not yet touched the manufacturers of cheap furnishings. In the stores regularly patronized by tenement shoppers, the plush parlor set with the usual accompanying atrocities still prevail.

The teachers of the "model flats" find it necessary to buy plain, unpainted wooden chairs and tables, sold for kitchen ware, and to stain them for use in the living room. No matter how many pretty designs may now be had in expensive or even moderately-priced china, it takes considerable persistence to find a really cheap dinner set in tasteful design. This situation makes it difficult for the pupils, when graduated, to "go and do likewise."

Still another effort along a unique line is being made to raise the standard of taste in the homes of the tenement dwell-

ers. This is designed especially for working girls, or groups of them, on small wages. In a group of model tenements in the upper east side, apartments of two or three rooms are furnished for groups of two or three girls. These furnishings may either be rented for a small sum a week, or purchased on a philanthropically arranged installment plan, according to the desires of the different lessees. The effort here is distinctly more decorative than that of the model flats, for the occupants expect to do only light housekeeping. The girls' first need is a living room, where they can receive company, and for this the kitchen is pressed into service. Screens, of the same color as the walls, are placed around the stove and sink; the set-tubs are covered so that they become a shelf, and curtains are put in the glass door of the china closet, concealing its utilitarian purpose. Pretty curtains, and a wicker easy chair, bought second-hand, and painted to match the rest of the room, provide the finishing touches.

A two-room apartment, entirely furnished by a girl earning ten dollars a week, was shown the writer. First, she had painted the walls a pretty shade of tan, and had the wood work stained a darker brown to harmonize with them. The screens which cut off her stove and sink were made of tan burlap, stretched upon a clothes horse, while a slab of oiled wood covered her set tubs. On this she placed her prettiest dishes.

Her easy-chair had a cushion also of tan burlap, and the center table was stained a dark brown. Except at meal times, this was covered with a Chinese cloth in harmonizing tones, while her curtains of a Chinese cotton repeated the colors. Her reading lamp was possibly the most ingenious of all her arrangements. A common glass kerosene lamp was set in a brass jar, while the shade was made of three Chinese paper fans, which glowed in lovely browns and soft oranges when the light shone through. The shade cost her twelve cents, which all goes to prove that there can be beauty in a tenement home, if you "mix your buying with brains."